

TO: Director

FROM: Co-Chairs
Restructuring Initiative Workgroup

SUBJECT: Restructuring Initiative Workgroup Continuity and
Coordination with other Workgroups--ACTION

The Restructuring Initiative Workgroup (RIW) has concluded two of five scheduled meetings. At the first meeting, you provided a workgroup charge and invited us to make suggestions after we had an opportunity to consider the issues.

ISSUE

After reviewing both the long-term forces affecting Indian health care and Secretary Thompson's "one-HHS" restructuring plans, we have identified several concerns and are recommending adjusting the RIW process and timeframe.

DISCUSSION

The Workgroup members identified the following concerns.

- The charge to specify how Indian Health Service (IHS) should look like in the next five years is an immensely complex task that we cannot fully complete in a 3-month timeframe.
- It is difficult to assemble required data and perform the necessary technical analysis in the limited time available.
- It is impractical during such a short timeframe to obtain comprehensive Tribal consultation that is expected and required by the IHS Tribal consultation policy.
- The IHS has created a number of other concurrent workgroups and initiatives, e.g., Business Plan Workgroup (BPW), Information Systems Advisory Committee (ISAC), "wrap-around" initiative, IHS Strategic Plan Workgroup, and

others which appear to overlap, in part, our charge and may result in confusion, coordination problems, and unnecessary duplication.

- Participation by Tribal Leaders in so many concurrent workgroups is overextending their invaluable time.

RECOMMENDATION

We acknowledge the very tight schedule to coordinate "one-HHS" restructuring plans with IHS budget formulation, therefore, we recommend that you indicate support for our submission of initial recommendations to you addressing, as a minimum, HHS restructuring plans as you requested in the workgroup charge by June 1 by initialing on the "Approved" line below.

DECISION

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Date _____

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that you indicate your support for a 4-month extension of the RIW by initialing on the "Approved" line below. The extension (July - October, will allow the RIW to address a broader 5-year plan for the IHS and to more thoroughly develop the restructuring plans. We anticipate meeting monthly through May to develop our initial recommendations and we request two additional meetings sometime from July through October to complete the charge.

DECISION

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Date _____

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that you indicate your support for linking the BPW, ISAC, and other workgroups, as appropriate, under the umbrella guidance from in the RIW by initialing on the "Approved" line below. In addition to their original responsibilities, the workgroups will plan operational/technical details of restructuring options, especially 5-year options, under the broad guidance from the RIW. This linkage will reduce

duplication, promote a coordinated approach, provide representative Tribal Leadership, and reduce time demands on busy Tribal Leaders.

DECISION

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Date _____

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the BPW membership be constituted to focus on substantive expertise to staff out operational details of options from the RIW. Please indicate your support for this recommendation by initialing on the Approved line below.

DECISION

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Date _____

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the IHS reimburse travel and similar support costs for four Tribal technical support staff to the RIW. Please indicate your support for this recommendation by initialing on the "Approved" line below.

DECISION

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Date _____

Joseph A. Moquino
Council Member, San Juan Pueblo
Tribal Co-Chair

Kathleen A. Annette, M.D.
Director, Bemidji Area
Federal Co-Chair